REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-34 are pending in this application. Claims 2, 4, 6, 8, 14, 16, 18, and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Claims 1, 5, 13, 17, 25, and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as anticipated by admitted art. Claims 3, 7, 9-12, 15, 19, 21-24, and 27-34 are allowed. Claims 2, 4, 6, 8, 14, 16, 18, and 20 were noted as allowable is rewritten to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, and to include all of the limitations of their base claims and any intervening claims.

Initially, applicant gratefully acknowledges the indication of the allowance and allowable subject matter in claims 2-4, 6-12, 14-16, 18-24, and 27-34.

Addressing now the rejection of claims 2, 4, 6, 8, 14, 16, 18, and 20 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, that rejection is traversed by the present response.

Each of the above-noted independent claims 2, 6, 14, and 18 is amended by the present response to now delete the language "wherein a distance between respective threshold value setting start pixels in adjacent halftone cells is made as equal as possible", so that thereby those claims no longer recite the language noted as unclear in the Office Action.

The presently submitted amendments are believed to address the above-noted rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph.

Addressing now the rejection of Claims 1, 5, 13, 17, 25, and 26 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as anticipated by applicants' admitted art, that rejection is traversed by the present response.

The basis for the outstanding rejection references the admitted art of Figure 8C to meet the claim limitations. However, applicants submit the outstanding rejection is not fully considering each of the positively recited claim limitations.

Independent claim 1 sets forth, inter alia, two operations. A first operation cuts off only first and second corners of only respective first and second opposite corner square cells on a square grid to form non-regular hexagonal cells. A second operation set forth in claim 1 recites "combining plural of said hexagonal cells into one combined single halftone cell". Applicants respectfully submit that clearly the admitted art of Figure 8C does not disclose that second step. The other independent claims 5, 13, 17, 25, and 26 also require similar limitations.

With reference to Figure 1 in the present specification as a non-limiting example, different hexagonal cells 1-1, 1-2, and 1-3 are initially formed by cutting off only first and second corners of only respective first and second opposite corner square cells on a square grid. However, a further operation is then performed to combine in the example of Figure 1 the three hexagonal cells 1-1, 1-2, and 1-3 into the single halftone cell 1. That operation of combining such hexagonal cells 1-1, 1-2, and 1-3 into a single halftone cell 1 is believed to clearly distinguish over the applied art in Figure 8C.

In Figure 8C, each of individual hexagonal cells forms a halftone cell. In Figure 8C there is no combining of plural of the hexagonal cells into a single halftone cell.
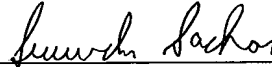
The outstanding rejection indicates to "[n]ote the correspondence of Figure 8C (Applicant's admitted Prior Art) and Figure 1 (the invention as described in claims 1, 5, 13, 17, 25, and 26)". In that respect applicants note it is clear that there is a difference between the admitted art of Figure 8C and Figure 1; in the admitted art of Figure 8C there is no combination of plural of the hexagonal cells into a single halftone cell. The above-noted claims clearly reflect such differences.

In view of these foregoing comments, applicants respectfully submit each of claims 1, 5, 13, 17, 25, and 26 distinguishes over the admitted art of Figure 8C.

As no other issues are pending in this application, it is respectfully submitted that the

present application is now in condition for allowance, and it is hereby respectfully request

that this case be passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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